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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MEMORIAL DAY

In the post-World War II years, we seem to have slowly forgotten the true meaning and the actual reason for Memorial Day. This uniquely American commemoration began after the Civil War and was meant to be a day devoted to our nation's war heroes. This day was meant to be a day of reflection and remembrance; a day of mourning.

More often than not, we can get lost in our holiday fun and forget the true meaning of this somber holiday. To some Memorial Day is the first day of summer; to others it is just another day off where they can spend their time at the beach, barbequing with friends and family or devote their day to great sales and good shopping. But to be honest, Memorial Day was created to be far more of a somber day. It is a day for us to remember our fallen soldiers; reflect on who they were and how much their sacrifice means to our society.

Throughout our communities, we enshrine our fallen heroes through monuments, by renaming parks in their honor, and by creating groups that bear their name; but that is not enough. We must remember them not only by their physical memorial but also we must remember who they were and be grateful for their unwavering commitment to the United States of America.

It is my hope that each of us will always remember the true meaning of Memorial Day. Remember the men and women who fought for this country and those who still lay their lives on the line each and every day to preserve our freedom.

So this Memorial Day I ask that you take a moment, in fact, take several moments from your holiday activities, to think of all those who have been lost to us; who gave the ultimate sacrifice, and honor them. Remember their names and look at their pictures. Remember their stories and remember whom they have left behind. Most importantly, remember that we are, in no small way, beneficiaries of their suffering and death and that we owe it to them, to never forget.

